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ABSTRACT

This report presents in detail a unicameral government structure with supporting student and faculty caucuses, recommended for the University of New Hampshire by its Committee on Government Organization to (1) provide maximum participation to all members of the university community on a fair and equitable basis, and (2) provide a more efficient structure than the existing one with its competing power groups. The proposed 77-member University Senate would comprise 30 undergraduate students, 30 faculty members, 12 administrators and five graduate students. Its work would be organized by an internal Executive Council that would, among other things, serve the President of the University in an advisory capacity, prepare the agenda for Senate meetings, recommend nominations to all Senate committees, and take actions on an interim basis between meetings and during vacation periods. The faculty and student caucuses would be composed of senators representing faculty and undergraduate students respectively. Every year, each caucus would select a chairman from one of its members who would serve on the Executive Council and preside at meetings of the respective caucuses. The hope is that the proposed unicameral structure will unite the university community by bringing together and promoting trust among students, faculty members, and administrators. (WM)

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REPORT

of the

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION

March 6, 1969

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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Ideally, the three major groups in a University - faculty, students and administrators - work together toward a set of clearly identified educational goals. Practically, the ideals are often frustrated by a lack of agreed-upon goals, and by separating the three major groups into competing power groups. Both of these causes of frustration exist at UNH. The following is a report recommending a new governmental structure which the Committee is convinced will help to draw the University together, provide participation and fair representation for all members of the University Community, and operate more efficiently than the present governmental structure.

The Committee on Government Organization proposes a unicameral University government structure with supporting Student and Faculty Caucuses. The University Senate would be the only legislative body for University-wide policy. The Caucuses would consist of those University Senators who are Faculty members, and those University Senators who are undergraduate students. The Student Caucus would replace the present Student Senate. Details of the Committee's recommendations are presented below.

UNIVERSITY SENATE

1. Composition. The total size of the University Senate would be 77. There would be 30 Students*, 30 Faculty, 12 Administrators* and 5 Graduate Students as voting Senators. Faculty members would be elected for three-year staggered terms without consecutive re-election. Student members would be elected for one-year terms with re-election privileges. The Senate would elect one of its members to be Chairman and to preside at all meetings. He would be elected at the first meeting of each newly elected Senate.

2. Executive Council. The work of the Senate would be organized by an internal Executive Council whose membership would include the President of the University, as Chairman, the Academic Vice-President, the Chairman of the Faculty Caucus and two elected faculty Senators, the President of Student Government, the Chairman of the Student Caucus and one elected student Senator, and the Chairman of the Graduate Student Caucus. The Executive Council would serve the President of the University in an advisory capacity, recommend nominations to all University Senate committees, assign work to committees, prepare the agenda for Senate meetings, and take actions on an interim basis between Senate meetings, over vacation periods, etc.

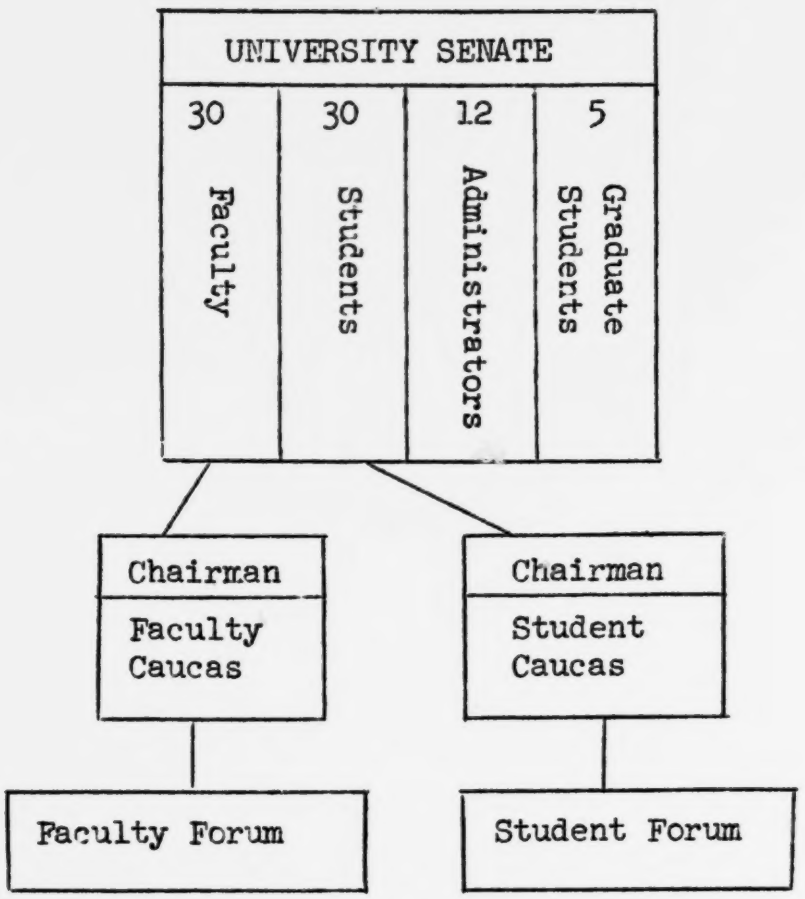
3. Caucuses of the Senate. Senators representing faculty and undergraduate students shall respectively constitute the Faculty Caucus and the Student Caucus of the University Senate. Each spring, each Caucus shall elect one of its members to serve as Chairman. The Chairman of the Caucus shall serve on the Executive Council of the University Senate, and shall preside at meetings of their respective Caucuses. (In the case of the Student Caucus, the Caucus would be responsible for work outside the scope of the University Senate as detailed in point 9, below.)

*For the 30 Student Senators, 29 would be elected by district and the 30th would be the President of Student Government, ex officio. For the transition from the present government, 28 would be elected by district and the President of Student Senate as well as the President of Student Government would be ex officio members. All 12 Administrators would be ex officio members and would be the following: The President of the University, all Vice Presidents (4), the Deans of all Colleges and Schools (6), the Dean of Students.

After consulting with their Forum, the Student or Faculty Caucus may decide by a 2/3 majority vote that an item on the University Senate agenda should be decided by an exceptional majority because of its gravity. After voting on such an item, if a 2/3 majority of the Caucus is achieved, the Caucus involved may require that any University Senate action on that item be taken only by the exceptional majority of 2/3 of the University Senate present at the next Senate meeting.

4. Faculty and Student Forums. The Faculty Forum shall consist of all faculty on the Durham campus, all of whom will be free to speak, to initiate resolutions, and to vote. The Chairman of the Faculty Caucus shall preside at meetings of the Forum. In order that all members of the faculty may be heard in person on matters of concern to them, the Faculty Forum shall meet once a month, normally on the Monday preceding the monthly meeting of the University Senate. All Faculty Senators shall attend meetings of the Faculty Forum as a part of their duties. Resolutions or other expressions of opinion of the Forum are advisory and will be transmitted to the Senate by members of the Faculty Caucus.

The Student Forum shall consist of all students on the Durham campus. All students will be free to speak, to initiate resolutions, and to vote. The President of Student Government shall preside at meetings of the Forum. All student Senators shall attend meetings of the Student Forum as a part of their duties. In order that all students may be heard in person on matters of concern to them, the Student Forum shall meet once a month, normally on the Monday preceding the monthly meeting of the University Senate. Resolutions or other expressions of opinion of the Forum are advisory and will be transmitted to the Senate by members of the Student Caucus.



5. Election Procedures. All University Senators would be elected from single member districts of approximately equal size. Faculty Senators would be elected by the following procedure:

a) Departments within Colleges would be added together as necessary to create districts of approximately equal size (e.g. 15). Large departments may therefore constitute more than one district.

b) Each district would nominate two candidates for the University Senate.

c) Faculty members would vote for one of two district candidates from each district on a college-wide basis. (After the first year, only certain districts would have candidates in any given year because of the three-year staggered term of office as a faculty Senator.)

d) No faculty Senator could serve two successive terms, unless the first term was to fill out the unexpired term of another Senator.

e) If a Senator is unable to attend a Senate meeting, he may send a representative in his place with full voting privileges after proper notification of the Secretary of the Senate.

f) To be eligible to run for University Senate or to vote, faculty members must be under full time contract.

Undergraduate student Senators would be elected by the following procedure:

a) Students living on campus (approximately 65% of all students) would be placed in approximately equal sized districts by grouping students according to residence (e.g. 225).

b) Each district would nominate two candidates to be placed on the election ballot through nominating primaries and students would vote on the nominees from their own districts in the election at district polling places.

c) Commuters would be allotted Senators in proportion to their numbers. These Senators would be elected by commuter districts constructed within colleges in much the same manner as with faculty Senators. Elections would take place at district polling places.

d) All Student Senators would serve for one-year terms and could run for re-election.

e) If a Senator is unable to attend a Senate meeting, he may send a representative in his place with full voting privileges after notification of the Secretary of the Senate.

Graduate

f) To be eligible to run for the University Senate or to vote, students must be full-time registered undergraduates.

Graduate Student Senators would be elected by the following procedure:

a) Departments within College would be added together to make districts of approximately equal size (e.g. 130).

b) Each district would nominate two candidates for the University Senate and Graduate students would vote on the nominees from their own districts in the election at district polling places.

c) To be eligible to run for University Senate or to vote, students must be full-time registered Graduate students.

6. Powers and Duties of the University Senate. The University Senate would be the legislative body of the entire University at Durham, subject always to the approval of the Board of Trustees. The University Senate would have legislative jurisdiction in all matters of student government, faculty government and educational policy. Those organizations supported by the Student Activity Tax would be under the direct jurisdiction of the Student Caucus and the Cabinet of Student Government. The University Senate could decide to delegate other specific kinds of jurisdiction to the Faculty and Student Caucuses at its discretion.

7. Committee Structure. The University Planning Committee, and its two subcommittees, Physical Plant Development and Academic Planning would become a Senate committee. The Financial Aids Committee also would become a Senate committee. The old Student Services Committee would be expanded in scope to become the Student Welfare Committee, paralleling the Faculty Welfare Committee. Other standing Senate committees would remain as at present. With respect to Administrative and joint Faculty-Administrative committees, student membership would be determined by the Executive Council of the University Senate.

8. Relationship to Student Government. This report has the following effect on present Student Government:

a) It replaces the section of the Student Government Constitution which deals with the Student Senate and assigns the function of the Student Senate to the Student Caucus and the Student Government Executive Branch (Cabinet).

b) Establishes a Budget Bureau (incorporating the present ASO) as part of the Student Government Executive Branch. To provide for student control, organizations supported by the Student Activities Tax will be responsible to the officers of Student Government. This is not to reduce the independence of any organization but to protect student interests.

c) Establishes the following structure of student government:

University Senate

President of Student Government
(Member, University Senate and
Senate Executive Council)

Student Caucus

(Can over-ride Student Government President's actions; Passes Student Activities Tax budgets.)

Executive Branch
(Cabinet)

(Including the heads of Student Activity Tax Groups plus any other members the President feels necessary for the functioning of Student Government. This executive branch absorbs present Student Senate Committees and includes RHAC).

9. Rationale. The rationale involved in arriving at the proposal outlined above is explained by two main arguments. First, the proposed unicameral system gives maximum participation to all members of the University Community on a fair and equitable basis. Because there are no exclusive domains, all members of the University Community have the right to express their opinions in the same body (University Senate), in private bodies (the Caucuses), or both, on any matter they feel strongly about. Students are provided a much stronger voice and much wider participation in all areas of University government and decision-making. Second, the proposed unicameral system is more efficient than the present University Senate/Student Senate structure in several areas. Rules changes can be argued and decided upon in a single University Senate meeting rather than being debated at least twice as is now the case. Furthermore, because the Faculty and Student Caucuses and Forums will have met prior to each meeting of the University Senate, faculty and student sentiment on proposed legislation will be known on a broader base than at present, and Senators will know whether the issue warrants a 2/3 (exceptional) majority type of action in University Senate. Additionally, a unicameral system should allow a reduced committee structure in the University. Under the new proposal, University Senate would replace the present tangle of overlapping committees with a unified committee structure representing all members of the University Community.

Finally, there is an organizational argument favoring the proposed unicameral system. (The Committee on Government Organization feels that tugs of war between legislative bodies would hurt the overall development of the University.) The unicameral structure in and of itself will tend to unite the University community by bringing the three major groups together more thoroughly. The unicameral structure promotes the building of constructive, shared goals and programs for the whole University as well as promoting trust between students, faculty, and administrators.